

sustainable environment for future generations.

Ethanol and biodiesel greatly benefit public health and the environment by protecting air and water quality and reducing greenhouse gas emissions. They are nontoxic, biodegradable, energy efficient, and cleaner burning sources of energy than petroleum-based fuels. A new report by the Pew Center on Global Climate Change finds that ethanol-blended fuels offer us the greatest promise for reducing transportation-related greenhouse gas emissions over the next 15 years.

The U.S. Department of Energy has concluded that petroleum-based fuels account for 82 percent of carbon monoxide, which, according to the National Research Council, accounts for 20 percent of smog formation in cities. In contrast, the Environmental Protection Agency has determined that ethanol-blended fuels significantly reduce these emissions, and biodiesel nearly eliminates sulfur emissions that contribute to acid rain and reduces potential cancer-causing compounds.

Clearly, the renewable fuels standard represents a momentous opportunity to enhance our Nation's energy security, strengthen our economy, create jobs, boost farm and rural income, and help clean up our environment. The 5 billion gallons of renewable fuels that would ultimately be required by the renewable fuels standard would replace gasoline we currently get from foreign oil, and at the same time reduce the price at the pump. Simply put, renewable fuels make good, common sense for our Nation and all of its citizens.

More to the point of the amendment now before us by the Senator from California on State exemptions—there is really no need to grant States exemptions right now because in the underlying bill it already provides for States to be able to apply for and be granted an EPA waiver if they can show the RFS severely harms the economy or environment of the State or if there is an inadequate domestic supply or distribution capacity to meet the requirement. So, really, the amendment offered by the Senator from California is unneeded because there is already a waiver provision in there.

Well, our renewable fuels standard is something we passed last year overwhelmingly with bipartisan support. I know there will be several attempts here to weaken it. I hope we again have, as we did last year, overwhelming bipartisan support to keep this strong renewable fuels standard in this bill and, get this Energy bill through and to the President so he can sign it this year.

I yield the floor and suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. SESSIONS). The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. DOMENICI. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered. The Senator from New Mexico is recognized.

Mr. DOMENICI. Mr. President, I want to discuss with the Senate where we are. As manager of the bill, I am interested in trying to see if we can entice and excite Senators about bringing their amendments that have to do with the ethanol part of this bill to the floor today, if possible. We have two pending and, very shortly, we will have a consent agreement regarding voting on those two. That would give us the afternoon for further discussion on and the reception of other amendments with reference to ethanol—if Senators desire to do that. We are aware of two or three others, perhaps four Senators who would like to offer amendments regarding ethanol.

I remind Senators there are many more issues in this Energy bill, although this is a very important one. Obviously, we want it thoroughly debated and, ultimately, hopefully, from the managers' standpoint, we would like it to be adopted as part of the bill. Sooner or later, we have to head on to some of the other provisions. There are seven or eight contentious ones at least that need to be discussed. We are now awaiting final word from the other side as to whether we can proceed. I understand we can.

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. DOMENICI. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to morning business.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

MEASURE PLACED ON CALENDAR—S. 1162

Mr. DOMENICI. Mr. President, I understand that S. 1162 is at the desk and is due for a second reading.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator is correct.

Mr. DOMENICI. I ask that it be in order to read the title of the measure.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will read the title of the bill for the second time.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 1162) to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to accelerate the increase in the refundability of the child tax credit, and for other purposes.

Mr. DOMENICI. Mr. President, I ask that the Senate proceed to the measure and object to further proceeding.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

Under rule XIV, the measure will be placed on the calendar.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT AGREEMENT—S. 14

Mr. DOMENICI. Mr. President, I understand the ethanol sequencing of votes is acceptable, so I will propound the unanimous consent request.

I ask unanimous consent that a vote occur in relation to the Feinstein amendment No. 843 at 4:30 today and that there be 10 minutes equally divided for debate prior to the vote. I further ask that following that vote, the Senate immediately proceed to a vote in relation to the Feinstein amendment No. 844, with 4 minutes equally divided for debate prior to that vote.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. DOMENICI. Mr. President, that means that at 4:30 we will start the first vote on S. 14, the Energy Policy Act. There will be two votes. There is another matter already pending, but we will await the arrival of the chairman of the HELP Committee, Senator GREGG, to see what his pleasure is regarding further time to debate the LIHEAP amendment and an amendment I made on his behalf thereto.

Hopefully that, too, can be disposed of today, although the Senator from New Mexico is in no way pushing that because Senator GREGG will use whatever time he needs in that regard.

Once again, Mr. President, I say to my fellow Senators, I know some of them have other amendments regarding the ethanol amendment. We also know that the ethanol amendment is very popular. We think it is a fair assessment to say it is probably going to pass rather handsomely in the Senate. Nonetheless, Senators desire to make their case and make their points, and the Senate is disposed, obviously, to let them do that. It would be nice if we could get that much of the bill done today; that is, debate on those issues pertaining to ethanol.

I note Senator BINGAMAN is standing. Perhaps he desires to speak at this point.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Mexico.

Mr. BINGAMAN. Mr. President, I certainly have no objection to anything the chairman said, but I would like to clarify, the votes are to start at 4:30 p.m. today; is that what the unanimous-consent agreement provides?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. That is correct.

Mr. BINGAMAN. I appreciate that. I yield the floor.

Mr. DOMENICI. I assume I said 4 o'clock. I was incorrect. It is 4:30 p.m.

I yield the floor and suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

RECESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the hour of 12:30 p.m. having arrived, the Senate will